

9/14/68

Dear Phil,

Many thanks for the clippings on Beckham. Quite a character. How ~~bad~~ badly did he do in the primary?

These people seem to show up more and more on the edges. That "church" repeats like a bad meal.

What a coincidence that we wrote each other the same time.

I'd often asked myself the question you pose about Pyne. The answer varies with the participant. Some just crave attention for person reason, some espouse a cause that may mean something to them if it seems ridiculous to others. They had been wanting me for a year. I had declined to do their show the end of 1966 when they required me to forgo a local show on the same station in LA on which Liebelser had agreed to debate me. He didn't show and I didn't get to do the Pyne show when it would have helped sales.

Generally, he is subhuman, with his staff in apparent terror of him. I can hardly explain how he was different that night. He did reach many, many people for me, those I'd never have been able to get to on the so-called better shows (which are not, they are merely more smooth).

Shaw's complaint is before the Supreme Court. I have no idea when it will be heard. In any event, there is little likelihood of a trial before early next year, if at all. What may work for a trial is the rather widespread belief that Shaw has something to hide, that is why he delays. That may, eventually, hurt the government more than his conviction.

I did speak to Martin McAuliffe when I was in N.O. We had a hurried meeting after a lunch date ~~we~~ had. I'd have liked to have spent more time with him for a number of reasons, but neither of us then had the time. I believe him. However, there are things he could do that would be worthwhile, whether or not they were for Garrison or got to him. Perhaps some time in the future we'll be able to discuss this and see if he can interest himself in helping establish a record of a strange and infamous part of our history.

On Epstein: He is plain dishonest, by intent, for fame and profit. In order to understand him it is necessary to have a much more extensive knowledge of the subject than most people have. He is not, really, a critic, though some of us so credit him. I was asked to do a short piece for BOOKS when his piece came out. They liked it but for some reason did not use it. I made it available to a number of smaller publications. Here is a copy from Penn Jones' paper. I do not need it back. That magazine article is about to be published as a book! Talk about propaganda. First Sparrow, then Epstein, apologists, with magazine articles that can be republished as books, while serious, legitimate, responsible works that are new cannot be published! I so long for a return we will probably never see, to the olden concept of letters, where men could fight each other with words, where Ideas and Concepts could compete, each with an audience, partisans, publishers! If I had a publisher I could write a real book on Epstein and the other Epsteins, in short time, too. But no one will publish the other side, in any mass form. This is called "freedom of the press". If the article leaves questions, ask them.

I have challenged Sparrow to a verbal duel in any form of his choosing, any forum or publication, with his work or mine or any combination of his choosing, and he will not. The Times Literary Supplement would not give me space for response, now they will print nothing on the subject at all. Sparrow has long-time intelligence

connections and is further parti pris because he is also gay. He, too, is deliberately dishonest. With him and Epstein there is no possibility that they are wrong by error. It is design.

Yours is an intelligent, sprightly publication. I look forward to the new issue. Best of luck with it!

If you have any misgivings about the request I made of you, do not shun expressing them. I will not think poorly of you if you decline. However, I want you to understand that there can be a tremendous satisfaction in turning these types on, and it can be done. After bringing them to public attention, which was not favorable to them, and for it earning their enmity, I went out to California and got Loran Hall and Lawrence Howard to speak to me frankly and go to New Orleans voluntarily. This despite their having gone to court in a successful effort to frustrate Garrison's subpoena! I'm presuming you have read enough of my work to know who these mercenaries of the extreme of the right extreme really are. I will be going out to California again and I will perhaps try and see them again. It will depend on whether I have time, for there is always much to do. In a way, Harber may be more of a challenge, for he appears to be better educated and probably has a higher native intelligence. He can think he has something to fear by talking. I do not really know what he knows. Generally, however, it is safer to share such secret knowledge and let it be known, for this eliminates all possibility of violent reaction save from the irrational or excessively vindictive.

You ask how I am? Physically tired, for I've determined to lose weight and I have, and I'm forcing myself away from the typewriter to do physical work that must be done around the place. Besides, I believe the male requires physical activity for mental and emotional well-being. But I feel it. In my mind, I am, to a degree, content, for I know I have already done the impossible, am satisfied, though I will not say it publicly, that I have done an investigative reporting job like none in history (I have more unpublished than I have published). I am gratified that I have met and overcome the most taxing and unusual challenges, the more so because I am convinced that they are essential to the continuation of any semblance of meaningful freedom. It is already something I will pay for the rest of my life, that may keep me in perpetual debt, may deny me any decent publisher. My only genuine regret here is that the burden is greater for my wife. Our debt, to us, is enormous. How we will repay it I do not know. I do know that we will.

I am also longwinded! Gotta get to other letters in today's mail, which I am answering after dark. Many thanks for this help - it is help. You will understand that merely establishing a record for the future is worthwhile, and this I will have done and this, if in no other way, is the help in just sending clippings. I will also copy and forward them. This did not appear elsewhere, to the best of my knowledge.

Best regards,

Harold Weisberg